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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 11, 13, 14, 18, 20, 21 and 23 as follows (all pending claims and their status identifiers are reproduced below):

1. (Currently Amended) A method ~~for~~ facilitating a sale of a product with a computer system from an inventory of a selling entity, the method comprising steps of:

receiving information into the computer system regarding a customer's needs and desired option selections related to one or more of products of the selling entity;

receiving a value input associated with each desired option selection into the computer system ~~to rank~~ ranking the importance of each of the desired option selections;

defining a configured product ~~which satisfies~~ satisfying the customer's needs and the desired option selections using one or more solvers containing logic rules ~~to constrain~~ constraining selection of available product options; and

identifying from the inventory of the selling entity one or more available products that most closely matches the configured product having the desired option selections of the customer based on the value input associated with the desired option selections, when an identified available product that exactly corresponds to the configured product is not found in the inventory of the selling entity.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the value input associated with the desired options corresponds to a numeric value indicating importance of the associated desired option selection.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the value input associated with the desired options corresponds to a relative value indicating importance of the associated desired option selection as compared to other desired option selections, the identifying step comprises identifying from the inventory of the selling entity one or more available products that most closely matches the configured product based on using the relative values of the value input associated with the desired option selections.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2 wherein the numeric value used in the value input corresponds to a value between 0 and 10.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the logic rules comprise constraint rules which define engineering relationships between product options used to constrain use of combinations of options.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the logic rules comprise resource rules which define relationships between product options in terms of resources used and resources required.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the logic rules comprise cross-reference rules which define relationships between similar product options.

8. (Cancelled).

9. (Cancelled).

10. (Cancelled).

11. (Currently Amended) A method ~~for~~ facilitating a sale of a configurable product with a computer system from an inventory of a selling entity, the method comprising steps of:

presenting <u>to</u> a customer by use of the computer system with desired option selections available for inclusion within one or more of the selling entity configurable products;

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receiving information into the computer system regarding needs of the customer and desired option selections related to one or more of the selling entity configurable products;

receiving a value input associated with each desired option selection into the computer system ~~to rank~~ ranking importance of each of the desired option selections;

defining a configured product found within the inventory of the selling entity ~~which satisfies~~ satisfying the needs of the customer and the desired option selections using one or more solvers containing logic rules ~~to constrain~~ constraining selection of available product options; and

presenting to the customer by utilizing the computer system with one or more configured products found in the inventory of the selling entity that most closely matches the desired option selections specified by the customer based on the value input associated with the desired option selections, when the one or more configured products found in the inventory of the selling entity contain less than all of the desired selection option selections specified by the customer.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11 wherein the value input associated with the desired option selections corresponds to a numeric value indicating importance of the associated desired option selection.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11 wherein the value input associated with the desired options corresponds to a relative value indicating importance of the associated desired option selection as compared to other desired option selections, the step of presenting to the customer through the computer system with one or more configured products comprises presenting the one or more configured products found in the inventory of the selling entity that most closely matches the configured product based on using the relative values of the value input associated with the desired option selections.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of presenting to the customer by utilizing the computer system with the one or more identified available products found in the inventory of the selling entity that most closely matches the configured product having the desired option selections of the customer.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of identifying from the inventory of the selling entity one or more available products that exactly corresponds to the configured product.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of storing in a memory arrangement of the computer system product inventory information related to the inventory of the selling entity, and wherein the identifying step comprises identifying from the inventory of the selling entity, as stored in the memory arrangement, one or more available products that most closely matches the configured product.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of storing in a memory arrangement of the computer system configuration information related to selling entity products offered for sale by the selling entity, and wherein the defining step comprises defining the configured product which satisfies the customer's needs by constraining the selection of available product options to those stored in the memory arrangement as configuration information.

18. (Currently Amended) A computer system for facilitating a sale of a product from an inventory of a selling entity, the system comprising:

a memory arrangement having stored therein product inventory information related to the inventory of the selling entity and configuration information related to selling entity products offered for sale by the selling entity;

a user interface configured to receive from a customer needs and desired

option selections related to one or more of products of the selling entity; and

a configuration engine, operatively coupled to the memory arrangement and user interface, that (i) receives a value input associated with each desired option selection ~~to rank~~ ranking the importance of each of the desired option selections, (ii) defines configured product ~~which satisfies~~ satisfying the customer's needs and the desired option selections using one or more solvers containing logic rules ~~to constrain~~ constraining selection of available product options, and (iii) identifies from the stored product inventory information of the selling entity one or more available products that most closely matches the configured product having the desired option selections of the customer based on the value input associated with the desired option selections, when an identified available product that exactly corresponds to the configured product is not found in the stored product inventory information of the selling entity.

19. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 18 wherein the value input associated with the desired options corresponds to one of: (i) a numeric value indicating importance of the associated desired option selection and (ii) a relative value indicating importance of the associated desired option selection as compared to other desired option selections.

20. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 18 wherein the logic rules are selected from a group consisting of: (i) constraint rules which define engineering relationships between product options used ~~to constrain~~ constraining use of combinations of options, (ii) resource rules which define relationships between product options in terms of resources used and resources required, and (iii) cross-reference rules which define relationships between similar product options.

21. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 18 wherein the configuration engine presents to the customer through the user interface the one or more identified available products found in the inventory of the selling entity that most closely matches the configured product having the desired option selections of the customer.

22. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 18 wherein the configuration engine identifies from the inventory of the selling entity one or more available products that exactly corresponds to the configured product.

23. (Currently Amended The computer system of claim 18 wherein the configuration engine defines the configured product ~~which satisfies~~ satisfying the customer's needs by constraining the selection of available product options to the

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stored configuration information related to selling entity products offered for sale by

the selling entity.